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FOREIGN SERVICE DESPATCH

FROM

AMEMBASSY, MEXICO

27

DESP. NO.

TO

THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.

July 8, 1953

DATE

REF

Department's Airgram No. 905 of June 30, 1953

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SUBJECT:

**Alleged Claims of Mexican Government to Territorial Waters
Fifteen Miles from Mexican Shores.**

A translation of the article from which the Embassy took the statement that Mexico would extend its claims to territorial limits to the 15-mile zone is as follows:

"

"Piracy will be combated from the offices of the Ministry of Marine and in the territorial waters of Mexico, considered to be 15 nautical miles from shore and not only 9 as held by the United States. The controversy over this divergence which has been stirred up between the two governments is what the Ministry of Marine is trying to end in direct negotiations."

(Ultimas Noticias, May 27, 1953, p.1.)

An officer of the Embassy called upon Lic. Hugo Cervantes del Rio, Secretario Particular of the Ministry of Marine on July 7, 1953, to ask if Ultimas Noticias was reporting correctly the position of Marina Nacional. He replied by saying that the answer could come only from the Ministry for Foreign Relations and that the Ministry of Marine had no jurisdiction "in international matters", any more than the United States Department of Commerce could work out an international highway agreement with Mexico. He did not directly deny the assertion of Mexico's right to 15 miles of territorial waters and the question was directly put to him, whether the article was correctly reporting the position of Marina Nacional. He replied that insofar as the Ministry of Marine had no right to enter international matters the article was incorrect.

During recent discussions between Embassy officers and officials of the Ministry for Foreign Relations over American shrimp boats in Mexican waters, Mexico made no such claim nor even hinted that it intended to make claim to anything

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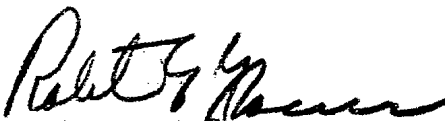
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more than 9 nautical miles of territorial waters. It is the Embassy's belief, therefore, that one or more officials of the Ministry of Marine indulged in some wishful thinking and indiscreetly stated to the reporter of Ultimas Noticias that Mexico's future policy would include a 15-mile limit, although that policy has no backing in other Departments of the Mexican Government and probably is not even a projected policy of any really responsible official of the Ministry of Marine.

For the Ambassador:


Robert G. Glover
Commercial Attaché

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